DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 890d.9111/39 FOR Report #-

FROM Beirut (Gaudin) DATED July 6,1932

TO NAME

1—1127 ors

REGARDING: Syrian-Palestinian (Border.)
Commission formed two years ago to delimit the frontier has not yet agreed upon the boundary.

leb

767N.90D 15/6

(REVIEW OF THE PRESS FOR THE STATES OF THE LEVANT UNDER FRENCH MANDATE FOR THE PERIOD JUNE 15 TO 30 INCLUSIVE, from the American Consulate General at Beirut, Syria, dated July 6, 1932.)

III

MISCELLANEOUS

Syrian-Palestinian Border Continues to be Undefined

The Commission formed two years ago to delimit the frontier between Syria and Palestine has not yet agreed upon the boundary. Both France and England want certain strategic points. As newspaper editorial points out, an anomalous situation exists whereby peasants often go to bed in Syria and wake up in Palestine or vice versa. When they protest to their respective governments, the Commission's struggles among its members increase in intensity as a result.[1]

767N.90d/15

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 790d.901 15/2 FOR memorandum

FROM Near Eastern Division (Murray) DATED March 2, 1932

TO NAME

1—1127 GPO

REGARDING:

Modifications of the boundaries between the French mandated territories of Syria and Lebanon and British mandated territories of Palestine and Transjordan.

Question of whether the United States should be consulted in cases of this nature before the modifications are agreed upon.

767N.90 D 15/7

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767N.90D 15/8

SEE 790d.901 15/3 FOR memorandum

FROM Legal Adviser (Ward) DATED July 29, 1932
TO NAME

1—1127 G P O

REGARDING:

Modifications of the boundaries between the French mandated territories of Syria and Lebanon and British mandated territories of Palestine and Transjordan.

Opinion that the United States should have been consulted and that these changes are legally inapplicable to the United States or its nationals.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 790d.901 15/4 FOR memorandum

FROM Near Eastern Division (Alling) DATED August 4, 1932
TO NAME

1—1127 o.f.o

767N.901 15/9

REGARDING:

Modifications of the boundaries between the French mandated territories of Syria and Lebanon and British mandated territories of Palestine and Transjordan.

Suggests that the matter of the changes in the Syrian-Palestinian frontier be brought to the attention of the French and British with a view to ascertaining whether these governments agree that the United States should have been consulted.

W1

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 790d.901 15/6 FOR instruction #165

~~FROM~~ (Atherton) DATED Aug.18, 1932

TO Great Britain NAME 1—1127 GPO

REGARDING:

Modifications of the boundaries between the French mandated territories of Syria and Lebanon and British mandated territories of Palestine and Transjordan.

Instructs to bring to the attention of the Foreign Office the view of this Government that the consent of the United States should have been obtained. United States will probably not object to the changes.

Wi

767N.901 15/10

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 790d.901 15/7 FOR Instruction #1280

~~XXXXXX~~ (Edge) DATED Aug. 18, 1932

TO France NAME

1—1127 GPO

767N.90 D 15/11

REGARDING:

Modifications of the boundaries between the French mandated territories of Syria and Lebanon and British mandated territories of Palestine and Transjordan.

Instructs to bring to the attention of the Foreign Office the view of this Government that the consent of the United States should have been obtained. United States will probably not object to the changes.

Wi

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
RECEIVED
AUG 21 1934
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

March 7, 1934.

767N.90d15

WSM:

The attached memorandum from the League reports that the British and French Governments have requested the Council to approve the Agreement concluded between the two Powers on March 7, 1923, for the delimitation of the western part of the frontier between Syria and Palestine. This raises the same question that was brought up in 1932 with regard to the terms of the British-French Agreement of October 31, 1931, regarding the transfer of territory between Syria and Palestine. It would appear to be clear that the French and British had been negligent in asking the approval of the Council of the League to the Agreement of 1923 just as they were negligent in asking our consent to and approval of the Agreement of 1931. Theoretically I suppose we should be entitled to ask the two Governments to request our consent and approval, but the situation is somewhat different than that respecting the 1931 Agreement for the 1923 Agreement was arrived at prior to the time that we negotiated our conventions with Great Britain and France. That is to say, the 1923 Agreement was actually in effect at the time our treaties came into force and consequently it may be held that we had tacitly approved the boundaries established by the

1923

767N.90D15/12

FILED
AUG 21 1934

1923 Agreement by not raising objections to them at the time the treaties were signed.

I have no reason to believe that the boundaries established by the 1923 Agreement are in any way detrimental to our interests, and the whole question is therefore more or less academic. I am bringing it to your attention merely as a matter of interest, but it may be well to pass the papers along to Mr. Ward to see what he thinks about our legal position in the matter.

PH[illegible]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE LEGAL ADVISER

MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
RECEIVED
AUG 21 1934
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

March 23, 1934.

NE

Mr. Alling:

In view of the fact that our assent to the British and French mandates over Palestine and Syria, respectively, made no reservation respecting boundaries, I think we would be held to have agreed to the boundaries delimited by the agreement between France and Great Britain concluded in 1923, notwithstanding that the agreement had not at that time been approved by the League of Nations. I doubt, therefore, whether we have even a theoretical right to be consulted now in regard to the agreement of 1923, and in view of the practical situation disclosed by your memorandum, I agree that no useful purpose would be served by raising the question of our possible right to be consulted.

FW 767N.90D 15/12

AUG 21 1934

~~790D.901215~~

Le:FXW:MA:SS

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 890d.9111/102 FOR Report #-

FROM Beirut (Farrell) DATED May 18,1935

TO NAME 1—1127 ...

REGARDING: Palestine-Syrian boundary.
LE JOUR of May 13 dispels rumors that a readjustment is to be effected.

lec

767N.90D 15/13

767N. 90d/15

Rumors of Boundary Readjustment with Palestine False

"Le Jour" of May 13 dispels the rumors that a boundary readjustment with Palestine is to be effected. The rumors arose from the fact that the Syrian Minister of Public Works went to the frontier with an engineer to construct a Gendarmerie post at the village of Alaka.

---

1. An-Nahar, May 11, 1935.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 867n.9111/147 FOR Report #143

FROM Jerusalem (Brent) DATED June 1, 1935

TO NAME

1—1127

REGARDING:

French High Commissioner in Beirut has denied reports that changes in Palestine-Syrian frontier are contemplated and that Jisr Benat Yacoub will be included in Palestine territory.

767N.90D15 / 14

HIGH COMMISSIONER'S RESIGNATION RUMORED

AL DIFFA'A states that a rumor has spread to the effect that the High Commissioner is about to resign from his position because of a disagreement with the Colonial Office.

Haaretz, May 14, 1935

Comment: The rumor is unfounded.

BORDER CHANGES DENIED

The French High Commissioner in Beirut has denied reports appearing in the Arabic press that changes in the Palestine-Syrian frontier are contemplated and that Jisr Benat Yacoub will be included in Palestine territory.

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RESEARCH

767.90d15

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 867n.9111/155 FOR Report #187

FROM Jerusalem (Brent) DATED Oct.4, 1935

TO NAME

1—1127 ...

REGARDING: Negotiations between Palestine and Syrian authorities in respect to final demarcation of the boundary between the two countries are reported to have been satisfactorily concluded.

767N.90D 15/15

Wi

It is added, moreover, that 200 aeroplanes are coming out from England.

Other reports state that the Royal Air Force are constructing an aerodrome at El Arish, with accommodation for 25 machines, and that the wartime landing field at Kantara is being repaired and brought up to date for service.

The report also states that two large new hangars are to be built at Kantara.

Palestine Post, September 5, 1935

SYRO-PALESTINIAN BOUNDARY — Negotiations between the Palestine and Syrian authorities in respect to the final demarcation of the boundary between the two countries are reported to have been satisfactorily concluded. An official announcement is awaited in Beirut, states the Arab paper AL DIFA.

767N.901/15

An agreement has been signed, it is stated, by the Officer Administering the Government in Palestine and M. le Vicomte d'Aumale the French Consul General in Jerusalem, on behalf of the French High Commissioner in Syria.

One of the clauses deals with the nomadic tribes on the frontier and defines the areas in which they may camp and pasture their sheep and also the type of arms they may use to defend their flocks. A mixed commission is to be appointed which will meet monthly to decide matters in dispute among the Beduin.

Palestine Post, September 12,1935

Comment: No further information has as yet become available.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

867N.9111/160

SEE 867n.9111/160 FOR Report #214

FROM Jerusalem (Brent) DATED Jan.7, 1936

TO NAME

1—1127

REGARDING: Purchase of Batiha lands by Jews on the Palestine-Syrian boundary.

Protest of Damascus Nationalists at - stating that they feared complications might arise as a result of this purchase.

9/

Wi

Comment: "If apprehended" has an altogether different connotation from "when apprehended"; its choice illustrates the Government's pessimism, an outlook which seems amply justified.

NO "ZIONISM" FOR SYRIA

In connection with the recent purchase of the Batiha lands by Jews, a delegation of Damascus nationalists called on the representative of the Syrian High Commissioner in Damascus and expressed their fear that complications may result (Batiha village is on the Palestine-Syrian boundary). The representative of the High Commissioner explained to them, however, that there is no cause for fearing a "Zionist danger" in Syria.

Doar Hayom, November 19, 1935

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Office of the Geographer
AUG 23 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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London, August 3, 1939.

SUBJECT: British Treaty Series No. 34 (1939).

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AUG 17 1939
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DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS
AUG 16 1939

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767N.90D15/17

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to forward herewith, for the information of the Treaty Division, five copies of the British White Paper entitled "Treaty Series No. 34 (1939) - Agreement Between Palestine And Syria And The Lebanon Amending the Agreement of February 2, 1926, Regarding Frontier Questions November 3, 1938", which have just been received gratis from His Majesty's Stationery Office.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
AUG 18 1939

FILED
AUG 28 1939

Respectfully yours,

For the Chargé d'Affaires a.i.:

John G. Erhardt,
Consul General.

Enclosures:
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From { Mission / ~~Consular Office~~ } *at* London, England.

Despatch, No. unnumbered *Date* August 3, 1939.

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Palestine and Syria and the Lebanon amending the Agreement of February 2, 1926, regarding Frontier Questions November 3,1938.

Cmd 6065.

Enclosure No. 1 to despatch No. 2 of May 3 1939
from the Embassy at London, England.
FRANCE

Treaty Series No. 34 (1939)

Agreement between Palestine and Syria and the Lebanon

amending the Agreement of February 2, 1926, regarding

Frontier Questions

November 3, 1938

Presented by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Parliament by Command of His Majesty

F.O. 906/17

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Cmd. 6065

AGREEMENT BETWEEN PALESTINE AND SYRIA AND THE LEBANON AMENDING THE AGREEMENT OF FEBRUARY 2, 1926, REGARDING FRONTIER QUESTIONS.

November 3, 1938.

AN AGREEMENT TO AMEND THE BON VOISINAGE AGREEMENT MADE BETWEEN THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR SYRIA AND THE LEBANON AND THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR PALESTINE DATED THE SECOND DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1926.

WHEREAS the High Commissioner for the French Republic in Syria and the Lebanon and His Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine did upon the second day of February, 1926,(1) enter upon a bon voisinage agreement (hereinafter called the principal agreement) to regulate certain administrative matters in connection with the frontier between the aforesaid territories:—

And whereas the High Commissioner for Syria and the Lebanon and the High Commissioner for Palestine are now desirous of making certain amendments to the said principal agreement;

Now therefore it is hereby agreed between His Excellency le Comte D. de Martel, Commander of the Legion of Honour, Ambassador of France, High Commissioner for the French Republic in Syria and the Lebanon, and His Excellency Sir Harold Alfred MacMichael, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., High Commissioner for Palestine, that the said principal agreement shall be amended by the substitution of the following paragraph in the place of paragraph 1 of Article IV thereof:—

"1. The collection of the tithe and werko imposed by the Governments of the territories of Syria and the Grand Lebanon and the collection of the rural property tax imposed by the Government of the territory of Palestine on estates contained within the limits of one village, whose grounds are crossed by the frontier, shall be undertaken by the Government in whose territory the village lies.

The collection of the tithe and werko as imposed by the Governments of the territories of Syria and the Grand Lebanon and the rural property tax as imposed by the Government of the territory of Palestine on properties or isolated parcels of land, situated outside a village and crossed by the frontier, shall be carried out by the Government in whose territory the farm, stables or threshing floor are situated.

(1) "Treaty Series No. 19 (1927)," Cmd. 2919.

AMENDEMENT A L'ACCORD DE BON VOISINAGE DU 2 FÉVRIER 1926 ENTRE LE HAUT-COMMISSAIRE EN SYRIE ET AU LIBAN ET LE HAUT-COMMISSAIRE EN PALESTINE.

---

3 *Novembre* 1938.

Vu l'accord de bon voisinage (appelé ci-dessous l'accord principal) conclu le 2 Février 1926 entre le Haut-Commissaire de la République Française en Syrie et au Liban et le Haut-Commissaire de Sa Majesté Britannique en Palestine, en vue de régler certaines questions administratives relativement à la frontière des territoires ci-dessus dénommés,

Attendu que le Haut-Commissaire en Syrie et au Liban et le Haut-Commissaire en Palestine sont maintenant désireux d'apporter certains amendements à l'accord principal,

En conséquence, S.E. le Comte D. de Martel, Commandeur de la Légion d'Honneur, Ambassadeur de France, Haut-Commissaire de la République Française en Syrie et au Liban, et S.E. Sir Harold Alfred MacMichael, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., Haut-Commissaire en Palestine, se sont mis d'accord pour substituer le paragraphe suivant au lieu et place du paragraphe 1 de l'article IV de l'accord principal :

"*Article IV.*—Le recouvrement de la dîme et du wirgho imposés par les Gouvernements de Syrie et du Grand Liban, ainsi que le recouvrement de la "Rural Property Tax" imposée par le Gouvernement de Palestine sur des domaines situés dans les limites d'un village dont le territoire est traversé par la frontière, sera assuré par le Gouvernement dans le territoire duquel se trouve le village.

"Le recouvrement de la dîme et du wirgho sur les bases fixées par les Gouvernements de Syrie et du Grand Liban, et le recouvrement de la "Rural Property Tax," sur les bases établies par le Gouvernement de Palestine sur des propriétés ou parcelles de terrain isolées, sises hors d'un village et traversées par la frontière, sera assuré par le Gouvernement sur le territoire duquel se trouvent situées la ferme, les étables ou les aires.

The proportion of the estates, properties and isolated parcels of land situated on either side of the frontier shall be determined by a Commission composed of one Palestinian official, one Syrian official and one local notable chosen by these officials.

The assessment of the tithe and werko shall be in respect of the portion of the estates, properties and isolated parcels of land lying in the territory of the Governments of Syria and the Grand Lebanon and the assessment of the rural property tax shall be in respect of the portion of such estates, properties and isolated parcels of land lying in the territory of the Government of Palestine.

The revenue collected in respect of estates contained within the limits of one village whose grounds are crossed by the frontier or in respect of any property or isolated parcel of land situated outside a village and crossed by the frontier shall be divided between the two Governments at the ratio which the assessment of the tax by the Government concerned bears to the total amount of taxes assessed by both Governments in respect of the whole of such estates contained within the limits of the village or of such property or isolated parcel of land.

The two Governments shall draw up at the end of each calendar year accounts of the sums thus received, and the Government collecting the taxes shall be entitled to a commission of 6% in this respect. The Governments will likewise exchange from time to time extracts of these accounts for settlement of the balance by the Government with whom such balance was held."

D. DE MARTEL,
High Commissioner for the French Republic in Syria and the Lebanon.

HAROLD MACMICHAEL,
His Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine.

"La division des domaines, propriétés et parcelles de terrain isolées situés de l'un ou de l'autre côté de la frontière sera effectuée par une Commission composée d'un fonctionnaire palestinien, d'un fonctionnaire syrien et d'un notable local choisi par les dits fonctionnaires.

"L'évaluation de la dîme et du wirgho sera proportionnelle à la portion des domaines, propriétés et parcelles isolées de terrain se trouvant en Syrie et dans le Grand Liban et l'estimation de la "Rural Property Tax" sera proportionnelle à la portion des dits biens-fonds, propriétés et parcelles isolées de terrain se trouvant en Palestine.

"Les impôts recouvrés relativement à des domaines se trouvant dans les limites d'un village dont les terrains sont traversés par la frontière ou relativement à des propriétés ou parcelles isolées situées hors d'un village et traversées par la frontière, seront répartis entre les deux Gouvernements suivant le rapport de l'évaluation de l'impôt par le Gouvernement intéressé à la somme des impôts fixés par les deux Gouvernements en ce qui concerne la totalité des dits domaines se trouvant dans les limites du village ou de la dite propriété ou de la parcelle isolée de terrain.

"Les deux Gouvernements feront, à la fin de chaque année solaire, le total des sommes ainsi perçues, et le Gouvernement qui aura encaissé les impôts aura droit de ce fait à une commission de 6 pour cent.

"Les Gouvernements échangeront également de temps à autre des relevés de ces opérations en vue du paiement du solde par le Gouvernement qui le détiendrait."

(Signé) D. DE MARTEL,
Haut-Commissaire de la République Française en Syrie et au Liban.

(Signé) H. A. MACMICHAEL,
Haut-Commissaire de Sa Majesté Britannique pour la Palestine.

10448 Wt. --- 1125 7/39 F.O.P. 19554 Gp. 340

Central File: Decimal File 767N.90D15, Political Relations Of States, Relations; Bi-Lateral Treaties., Political., Palestine And Syria, Boundary Questions. Composition Of Differences., July 6, 1932 - August 3, 1939. July 6, 1932 - August 3, 1939. MS Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States: Records of the U.S. Department of State, 1930-1944: Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations of Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States, 1930-1939. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com%2Fapps%2Fdoc%2FSC5111389545%2FGDSC%3Fu%3Domni%26sid%3Dbookmark-GDSC. Accessed 21 June 2025.